DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 407 018 JC 970 202

AUTHOR	Runnels, Angie; Mpinga, Derek
TITLE	Mentor Magic: Implementing a Successful Mentoring Program for New Chairs and Deans.
PUB DATE	Feb 97
NOTE	7p.; In: Walking the Tightrope: The Balance between Innovation and Leadership. Proceedings of the Annual International Conference of the Chair Academy (6th, Reno, NV, February 12-15, 1997); see JC 970 185.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrative Principles; Community Colleges; *Faculty Development; Inservice Education; Interprofessional Relationship; *Leadership Training; *Management Development; *Mentors; Program Design; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The Institute for Academic Leadership Development is a 2-semester practicum experience designed to help community college administrators gain leadership experience through the development and implementation of an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP). The IPDP is designed to help participants gain a knowledge of self, capacities for judgment and communication, interpersonal skills, an understanding of power and politics in colleges, and the capacity to interpret personal actions. North Lake College, in Texas, implemented a mentoring program to accept a participant from the Institute. The participant maintained constant communication with the mentor and was appointed as Dean-in-Training at the college for the two semesters. The mentor's role was to share information, answer questions, create opportunities, and advise the participant. Their relationship was based on the following strategies for academic leaders: focus on innovation and change, be proactive rather than passive, concentrate on decisions, involve as many members as appropriate in decision-making, and build on strengths and seek assistance in areas of weakness. Key elements of the program included good communication between the mentor and participant, strong feedback, the opportunity to work with a broad variety of specialties, the opportunity to reflect on the experience, and flexibility. (TGI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 407 018

MENTOR MAGIC:

IMPLEMENTING A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING PROGRAM FOR NEW CHAIRS AND DEANS

By

Angie Runnels
Vice President, Academic & Student Affairs
and
Derek Mpinga
Professor/Director, Math/Science Institute

North Lake College
Irving, TX

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G. Filan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Paper Presented at the
Sixth Annual International Conference for
Community & Technical College Chairs, Deans, and Other Organizational Leaders
February 12 - 15, 1997
Reno, Nevada

ACADEMY

JC970 202

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BIOGRAPHIES

Angie Stokes Runnels is Vice-President for Academic and Students Affairs at North Lake College of the Dallas County Community College District. She holds a Ph.D from the University of Texas-Austin. She began her community college career as an English faculty person at Grayson County College and as dean for the Liberal Arts Division at the same college. She served as dean for developmental studies and education at Richland College in Dallas. Prior to North Lake College, Dr Runnels served as vice-president for educational programs and resources at Kingwood College of the North Harris Montgomery Community College District.

Dr. Runnels has focused her career on instructional and student development leadership. She believes that the effectiveness of her division is significantly influenced by her own work...which also influences the work and success of the deans she oversees.

Derek Mpinga is professor of mathematics and director of the Institute of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics at North Lake College. He is a graduate of Texas Christian University and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and of the Institute for Academic Leadership Development (1996). Prior to coming to North Lake College, Dr. Mpinga taught at Tarrant County Junior College. He also served as Vice-President for Academic Affairs at both the Baptist Seminary(Zimbabwe) and the Nairobi Graduate School (Kenya). He is involved with leadership training programs for institutions in Africa.

MENTOR MAGIC: IMPLEMENTING A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING PROGRAM FOR NEW CHAIRS AND DEANS

INTRODUCTION

It all began with the desire to participate in the *Institute for Academic Leadership Development* two-semester practicum experience that the mentoring program was launced. The National Community College Chair Academy established the practicum experience with one purpose in mind:

> To provide an opportunity for participants to apply..... the concepts, principles, and skills learned during the weeks of training through the development and implementation of an Individualized Professional Development Plan.
> (Introduction to IPDP Participant Manual, 1995,p.5.6)

The whole idea is that the participant will develop an IPDP that is reflective of the specific needs, interests, and perspectives relating to leadership development. There are six underlying principles of the IPDP that were under consideration at all times:

1. ***A knowledge of self in terms of leadership***...This includes readiness, desire and motivation, knowledge and experience, and creativity and vision.
2. ***A capacity for judgment and decision making***...and an appreciation of the consequences of those decisions.
3. ***A capacity to communicate with others.***
4. ***Interpersonal skills*** that enable academic leaders to identify values and motives of individuals...
5. ***An understanding of power and politics in colleges*** and the sources and use of power in academic leadership.
6. ***A capacity to interpret personal actions*** within the leadership context.

(IPDP Participant Manual, 1995,p.6.18)

We want to recognize that both the mentor- Dr. Angie Runnels and the mentee- Dr. Derek Mpinga have been influenced by such leaders as S.R. Covey (his book: *Principle-Centered Leadership*) and J.E. Roueche et.all (his book: *Shared Vision*) on their work on *transformational leadership*. Our conviction, as Covey puts it, is:

> ....that one person can be a change catalyst, a transformer, in any situation, any organization. Such an individual is yeast that can leaven an entire loaf. It requires vision, initiative, patience, respect, courage, and faith to be a transforming leader.
> (Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, p. 287)

Our model provides a basis, not the answer, to all mentoring program models and our journey with you will be through the eyes of the mentor and mentee. Efforts will be made to identify the principles at work that can be adapted and adopted by any two leaders on the same journey.

North Lake College is one of seven colleges within the Dallas County Community College District. The instructional programs are under the supervision of the Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs and are divided into six divisions each with a dean. Two of the deans are responsible for student affairs and support services. There are departments within each division with the deans doing all the work and with some help from lead instructors for certain programs. It is under this environment that the mentor and mentee found themselves.... to develop skills for academic leadership.

MENTEE PERSPECTIVES

At the time that I decided to enter into the Institute for Academic Leadership Development, I had determined that I am ready to seek new adventures in educational administration. A number of colleagues did not understand why I wanted to do this and I reminded them that I had spent time in graduate school studying to be an educational adminstrator. With six years under my belt as vice-president for academic affairs in Zimbabwe and Kenya, *I was ready for new challenges*. One must develop a liking for the administrative challenges whether by choice or thrust upon the responsibility by circumstances or otherwise.

The best way to begin this was to *attend the first week-long leadership development seminar* and I do not regret that I did. The experience is worth it for all new academic leaders or those returning to the responsibilities after a brief absence(as is my case). Of the leadership topics covered, one that stands out for me was the *Behavioral Styles and How to Work with People with Different Styles*. No matter what we do, behavioral styles affect community college leaders daily and we do need to develop more skills in relating with and to people to achieve maximum success.

In order to *develop and design a year-long and quality professional development experience*, I was in *constant communication with my mentor*. Our discussions helped me focus on *what I needed most*...something I *had not had previous experience*...working in an American education institution's administrative environment. I was already serving as the co-director for the Institute of Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics, a service to and for students, and I thought it did not provide the kind of leadership I was seeking. Without any openings on campus and a continuing need to cut down the adminstration jobs, I wondered what would happen to my year-long experience. To my surprise, my mentor told me that she was going to appoint me *Dean-in-Training* and I did not know what to make of this until after the first meeting I attended as Dean-in-Training.

This set-up gave me the *freedom to explore all areas* in the college's administration. I was *not limited* to a specific department. The broader picture I was looking for was there. I could develop new career goals and objectives and I was able to identify the skills that I needed most. The other deans opened their doors wide to let me visit and see every aspect of their work. Watching the deans discuss and make decisions enabled me to *understand the power of politics and influence*

It was not a surprise to discover that as a leader I will have to...*work through others with whom there is no reporting relationship, have more responsibility than authority, and support other's ideas, feelings, and projects.*

MENTOR PERSPECTIVES

Mentoring is an act of deliberately *setting aside time to assist someone* in a professional pusuit. The task can be rewarding if the *mentor is committed to the idea of helping. Mentoring requires developing a plan, working the plan, and evaluating the plan for effectiveness.* The opportunity to serve as mentor for a Chair Academy member proved to be the greatest opportunity of all.

When the mentoring plan was created at North Lake College for the Chair Academy member, there was an immediate desire to *give the mentee every opportunity to learn everything* I knew and had experienced as a division dean. As mentor, there was a felt need to introduce the mentee to every aspect of leadership, and involving the person presently serving in the role of dean for an instructional division seemed to be the perfect way to do it.

The Academic and Student Affairs Council was invited to participate in the mentoring of our Academy mentee. Each dean has a unique specialty and knowledge of a special area that would benefit the mentee. Each dean was invited to share his/her expertise with the mentee and to determine which area of leadership and what skills and secrets they were willing to share. They each agreed to share and invited the mentee to serve with us on the council as an interim dean to the council, and to invite participation on all the issues presented and to bring agenda items to the council as well. The internship was to last for a full year, fall and spring semesters.

In every instance, *the mentor was to share information, answer questions, create opportunities* for collaboration and decision making, and *advise* the mentee. From scheduling to budgeting to resolving issues of students and faculty, the mentee was to experience every aspect of instructional leadership.

The following principles were used in establishing the mentor/mentee relationship:

1. The information shared would *focus on leadership.*
2. A strategy of the academic leader is to concentrate on keeping the work group *focused on innovation and change.*
3. A strategy of the academic leader is *to be proactive/active* rather than passive.
4. A startegy of the academic leader is to *concentrate on decisions.*
5. A strategy of the academic leader is to *involve as many members* as appropriate in the process leading to the decision.
6. Academic leadership is as challenging as any position in the college and can be equally rewarding.
7. A strategy of the academic leader is to *build on strengths and seek assistance* in areas of weakness.

REMARKS

A good mentor/mentee relationship is necessary for any worthwhile experience to occur for both. This model for mentoring brings home the following elements:

1. It is imperative to have *good communication* between the mentor and mentee. Sharing of expectations.
2. *Feedback is like wind to fire*...it helps provide the oxygen to burn and keep on burning.
3. It allowed the opportunity to *work with a broad variety of specialties* and allowed both sides to *have a fresh sense of enthusiasm* in academic leadership.
4. A good relationship allowed the mentee to *reflect* on the experience and not keep a log of activities.
5. *Flexibility* was evident on both sides . There was willingness to change and adjust as needs arose.

One last element of success: the on-going and constant communication among the institute's mentor (Dr. Nockie Zizelman) , the college mentor, and the Institute of Academy Leadership Development. The sharing of ideas and input given made the experience one hundred-fold better. Bear this in mind.

There can be no friendship without confidence,
and no confidence without integrity.
Samuel Johnson